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NOTES AND NEWS

WAR TIME CONFERENCE OF MODERN LANGUAGE TEACHERS

NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION
Tuesday and Wednesday, July 2 and 3, 1918

ORGANIZED UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE FEDERATION OF
MODERN LANGUAGE TEACHERS' ASSOCIATIONS

The conference held its sessions in Thaw Hall at the University of Pittsburg. Prof. Robert H. Fife, Jr., of Wesleyan University, presided at all of the sessions. In the absence of the Secretary, Miss Vogel, Mr. Reginald H. Johnson of the University of Pittsburg, acted as Secretary. Mr. Johnson was also the efficient local chairman in charge of the arrangements.

The attendance was not large, but a most gratifying feature was the presence of teachers from a distance, not a few paying the costs of a by no means inexpensive trip to attend the conference. All of the constituent associations of the Federation, as well as the central association, were represented.

The morning session of July 2d was devoted to the subject of "The War and the Modern Languages."

Prof. F. B. Collette of the Carnegie Institute of Technology in Pittsburg gave an interesting paper on "Teaching French to Soldiers," reciting his experience among soldiers at Pittsburg, and making some deductions as to the right methods for high-pressure instruction in military French.

The next paper on "Spanish as a Substitute for German for Training and Culture" was given by Mr. Lawrence A. Wilkins, in charge of Modern Languages in High Schools in New York City. Mr. Wilkins' position regarding the value of Spanish as a substitute for German is well known, and was presented with his usual enthusiasm and vigor. The paper will be printed in an early number of *Hispania*.

A most interesting paper followed by Prof. E. H. Wilkins of the University of Chicago, a member of the National War Work Council of the Y. M. C. A., on "The Modern Language Teacher and National Service in War Time." Prof. Wilkins presented the claims of the Young Men's Christian Association on the ability and

experience of teachers of French and Italian. A very lively discussion followed as to the relative merits of Spanish and Italian for culture, and the political position of Spain during the present war.

The afternoon session took up as its general subject "The Modern Languages and our Country's Future," and brought forth four able papers. The first was by Prof. Kenneth McKenzie of the University of Illinois, on "The Study of French in Relation to National Service." Prof. McKenzie, who has made a special study of books on war French, pointed out some of the difficulties which are met with in this kind of instruction and emphasized especially the importance to our nation in the immediate and more distant future of a knowledge of French. He also discussed the methods which are to be used, high-pressure courses and the dangers which must be avoided in this kind of work.

Prof. E. W. Bagster-Collins, of Teachers College, Columbia University, followed with a well analyzed paper on "The Future of German Instruction in America." The audience listened most intently while he gave an outline of what he believed to be the proper subject matter of future German courses, and the methods of overcoming the difficulties now confronting the German teacher. A very interesting and lively discussion followed regarding the teaching of foreign literature in the High School, and once more the question as to the relative pedagogical value of the various cultures of Europe came to the fore.

Prof. Edith Fahnestock of Vassar College spoke on "The Teaching of Spanish as a Patriotic Service," and reintroduced the subject of the morning, opening a lively discussion of the Spanish attitude toward Germany and the Allies.

Prof. Marian P. Whitney, of Vassar College, gave the final paper of the day on "National Ideals in the Teaching of the Modern Languages," discussing in a reasoned manner the attitude which the American teacher must take toward the culture of the modern nations of Europe, and dealing especially with the comparative value of the study of history and literature in the modern language courses. There followed a discussion as to the necessity for securing American teachers of the modern languages in our schools.

On July 3d, the morning session was given up to round table conferences, and the following programs were presented in the French and Spanish sections. The German section held no meeting.

French Section.—Chairman, Professor E. B. de Sauzé, University of Pennsylvania.

Subject: "The Use of Phonetics in Teaching Pronunciation in Secondary School."

A paper by Professor Anna Woods Ballard, Teachers College, was read in the absence of Professor Ballard by Miss Mary Morgan of Peabody High School, Pittsburg. It was discussed by Miss Lavigne, Miss Reed, Mr. Milwitsky and Mr. French.

A paper by Mr. Coit R. Hoechst, Schenley High School, Pittsburg, was discussed by Professor Collette, Professor de Sauzé, Miss McClellan and Miss Sanford.

A paper by Professor Collette was discussed by Mr. Johnson, Mr. French, Mr. Milwitsky, Mr. Anderson, Miss Marty and Mr. Majeurus.

The section was attended by about fifty teachers.

Spanish Section.—Chairman, Mr. Lawrence A. Wilkins, In charge of Modern Languages in High Schools, New York City.

Subject, "The Elementary Year in Spanish."

Mr. Wilkins spoke on the necessity for formulating definite ideas on methodology and requirements. The following papers were presented:

Mr. Guillermo Sherwell, New Utrecht High School, Brooklyn, N. Y. "The Teaching of Pronunciation in the Elementary Year."

Professor Edith Fahnestock, Vassar College, "Oral Work of the Elementary Year in College."

Mr. M. A. Luria, De Witt Clinton High School, New York, presented the high school view of this subject.

Mr. William A. Barlow, Commercial High School, Brooklyn, N. Y., "Grammar in the Elementary Year, How Much and How?"

Miss Carolina Marcial Dorado, Ginn & Co., New York, "Reading in the Elementary Year, Kind and Amount."

Miss Isabelle Day, English High School, Lynn, Mass., "Devices and Accessories in the Work of the Elementary Year."

Miss Ruth G. Wilson, Bushwick High School, Brooklyn, and Miss Gracia L. Fernandez, New Utrecht High School, Brooklyn, "Club Work in the Elementary Year of High School."

Miss Catherine Kelly, Seward Park Intermediate School, New York, "Spanish Atmosphere in the Intermediate Schools."

An enthusiastic audience of forty-two heard the papers, many taking part in the discussions.

The afternoon session dealt with "Standards in Modern Language Teaching," and was opened by a paper on "Elementary Modern Language Instruction" by Prof. J. P. Hoskins of Princeton University. Prof. Hoskins dealt again with the subject which seemed to chain the special attention of the conference of the comparative value of the various literatures of Europe, and then proceeded to discuss the essential methods for elementary instruction. His paper is to appear in "School and Society." The dis-

cussion which followed dealt largely again with the relation of the teacher to the culture he is trying to present especially with the need of teachers trained in America.

The second paper by Prof. C. Handschin, of Miami University, was a very carefully prepared investigation on the "Supervision of Modern Language Work in the Junior School." His ideas were followed by the audience with intense interest, and especially his theory as to the division of classes into slow and fast sections brought forth discussion.

The final paper on "French in the Junior High School" by Prof. E. de Sauzé dealt with the mechanics of the first instruction in French of immature pupils.

The following resolution proposed by Prof. Handschin and seconded by Prof. Raschen was adopted.

RESOLUTION OF THE WAR TIME CONFERENCE OF MODERN LANGUAGE TEACHERS ADOPTED AT THE MEETING OF THE NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION, Pittsburg, July 3, 1918.

WHEREAS, we recognize the teaching of the American National ideals of liberty, democracy and humanity to be a first and paramount duty of every instructor in foreign languages, and whereas the part played by text-books is of the greatest importance in its influence on school and college youth, therefore be it

Resolved, (1) That as teachers of the foreign modern languages we pledge ourselves to refrain from the use of any book, whether of grammatical method, literary content or critical character, which in its subject matter or critical or illustrative apparatus tends to weaken in the minds of our youth the American ideals of liberty, democracy and humanity;

(2) That in the preparation for publication of critical or illustrative works of whatever character and in the editing of foreign language texts we pledge ourselves to emphasize in every way possible these national ideals.

(3) That the examination of foreign language texts from this standpoint be referred to the joint committee on texts of the Federation of Modern Language Teachers' Associations and the Association of Modern Language Teachers of the Central West and South in order that they may recommend only such lists of texts as contain nothing out of keeping with the national ideals above mentioned.

(4) That copies of this resolution be sent to the various associations bearing responsibility in this matter, viz., the Modern Language Association of America, the Association of Modern Language Teachers of the Central West and South and the constituent associations of the Federation of Modern Language Teachers' Associations and the Spanish Teachers' Association, as well as to the Emergency Council of Education of the National Council of Defense, and that they be published in THE MODERN LANGUAGE JOURNAL, *Hispania*, and as many other journals of modern language teachers as possible.

A pleasant feature of the conference was an informal banquet in the Soldiers' Memorial Building on the evening of July 2d, attended by about thirty visiting teachers. No speeches were made, but the opportunity for a pleasant get-together was much appreciated. Altogether, the conference, which was the third to be arranged by the Federation in connection with the annual meeting of the National Education Association was most successful in bringing together a group of men and women from the East and Middle West at a period when questions as to the modern languages are among the most important facing the country for discussion and conference. The papers presented were, as a rule, carefully prepared and of a high order of merit. Most of them have been or will be printed in various periodicals. It is unfortunate that it has been impossible to issue a volume containing these papers and the very informing discussions which followed them. It is to be hoped that these gatherings of leaders in modern language teaching from various sections of the country may be made a regular feature of the annual session of the National Education Association.

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